



Resilience and flourishing during the pandemic: Gender similarities and differences in mental health among adolescent and college-age youth

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Abstract

- Mental health has become a prevalent topic in research and is measured by resilience and flourishing levels.
- Adolescents and college students are vulnerable when it comes to mental health.
- The pandemic has changed academics, worsened adolescent mental health, and increased stressors for college students (Meghani et al., 2022; Center for Disease Control & Prevention, 2020).
- In this literature review, I explored articles about gender's impact on resilience and flourishing in adolescents and college students during the pandemic.

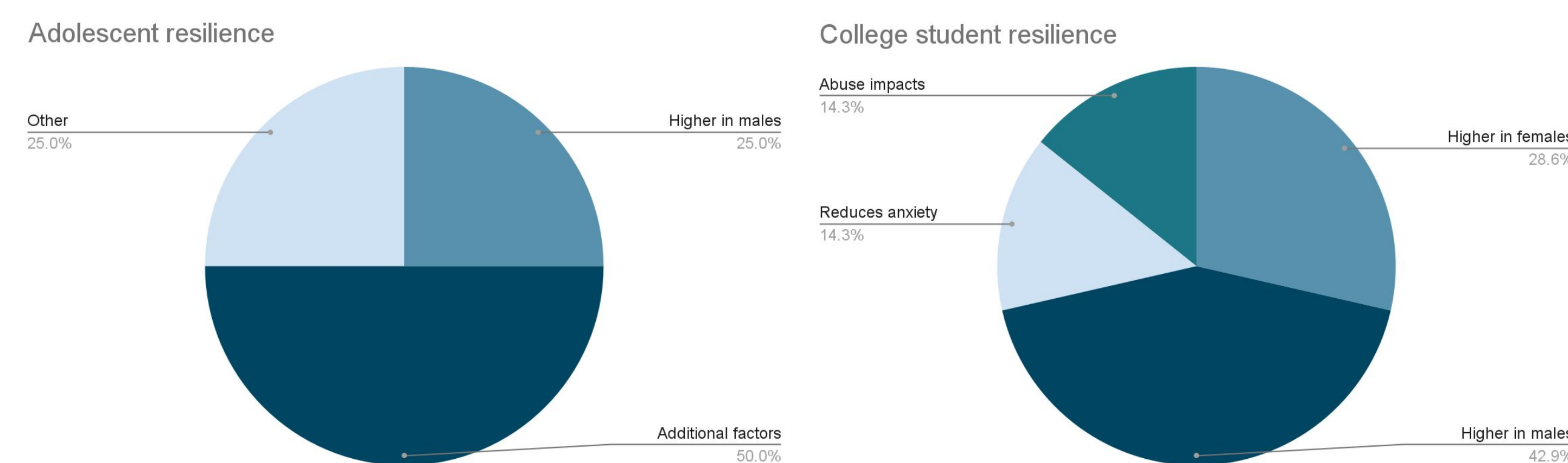
Introduction

- **Resilience: Ability to cope with stress after difficult life situations; reduces depression; provides psychological benefits** (Robbins et al., 2018; Fuller et al., 2016)
 - Gender & resilience: Mixed results about if females or males are more resilient (Anasuri & Anthony, 2018).
- **Flourishing: Combination of psychological, emotional, and social well-being.**
 - Higher flourishing → higher academic achievement and effective coping abilities (Sürücü et al., 2021; Yıldırım & Green 2023).
 - Gender & flourishing: Mixed results about if females or males experience higher levels of flourishing (Sheikh & Shafi, 2024).
- **Adolescents:** Experience crucial cognitive and identity development; prone to mental and physical vulnerabilities (Xing et al., 2023; Cerit and Simsek, 2021).
- **College students:** Experience academic pressure, social challenges, uncertain futures (López-Madriral et al., 2021).
- **Critical life events:** Increase stress, anxiety, and depression, (Marc et al., 2023); negatively impact physiology, cognition, behavior, and psychology (Gu et al., 2022).
 - **Pandemic:** Critical life event that worsened mental health of vulnerable youth.

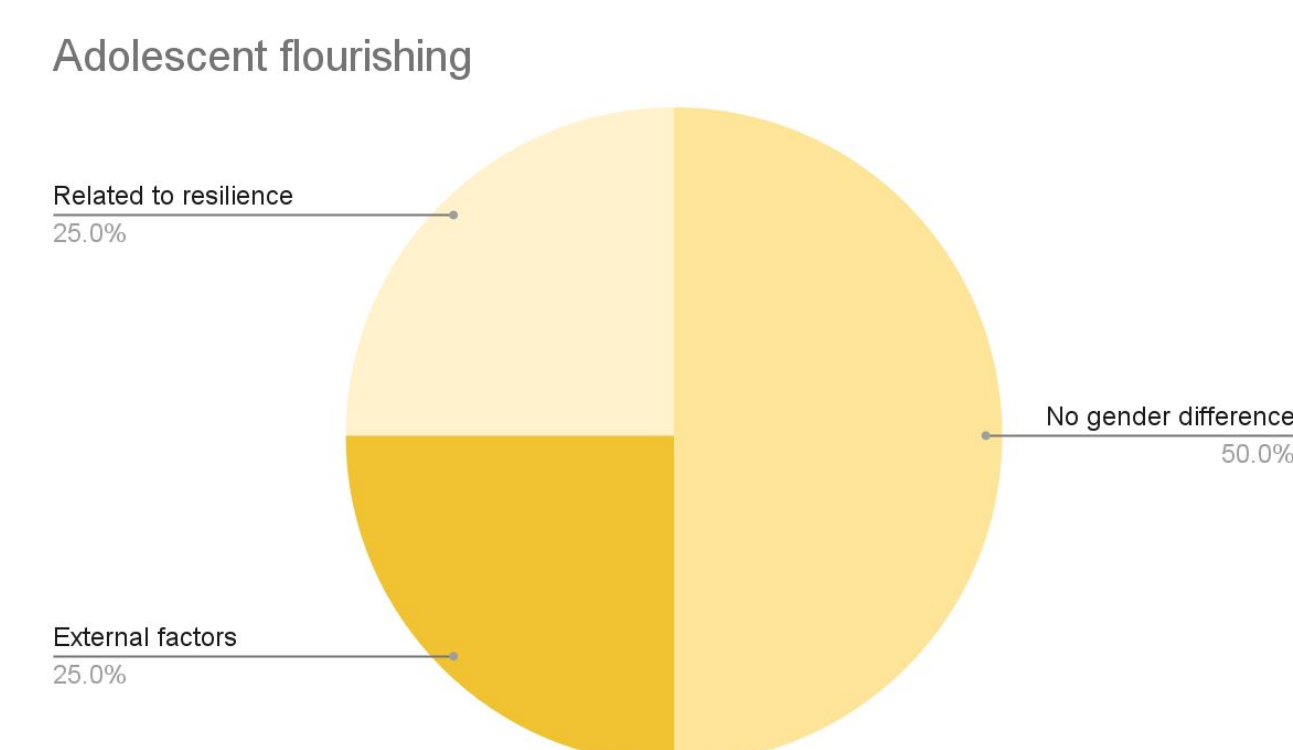
Methods

- Used Web of Science and PsycInfo to collect articles.
- Out of 79 articles, chose 23 to be in literature review.
- All articles were from 2020 to the present.
- Relevant search terms: "Gender and students and Covid-19 and resilience," "Gender and students and Covid-19 and flourishing or male or female," "Flourishing and students and Covid-19", "Adolescents and Covid-19 and resilience," "Adolescent and student and flourishing," "Mental health and students and men," "Flourishing and effects," and "Extrinsic factors and resilience."

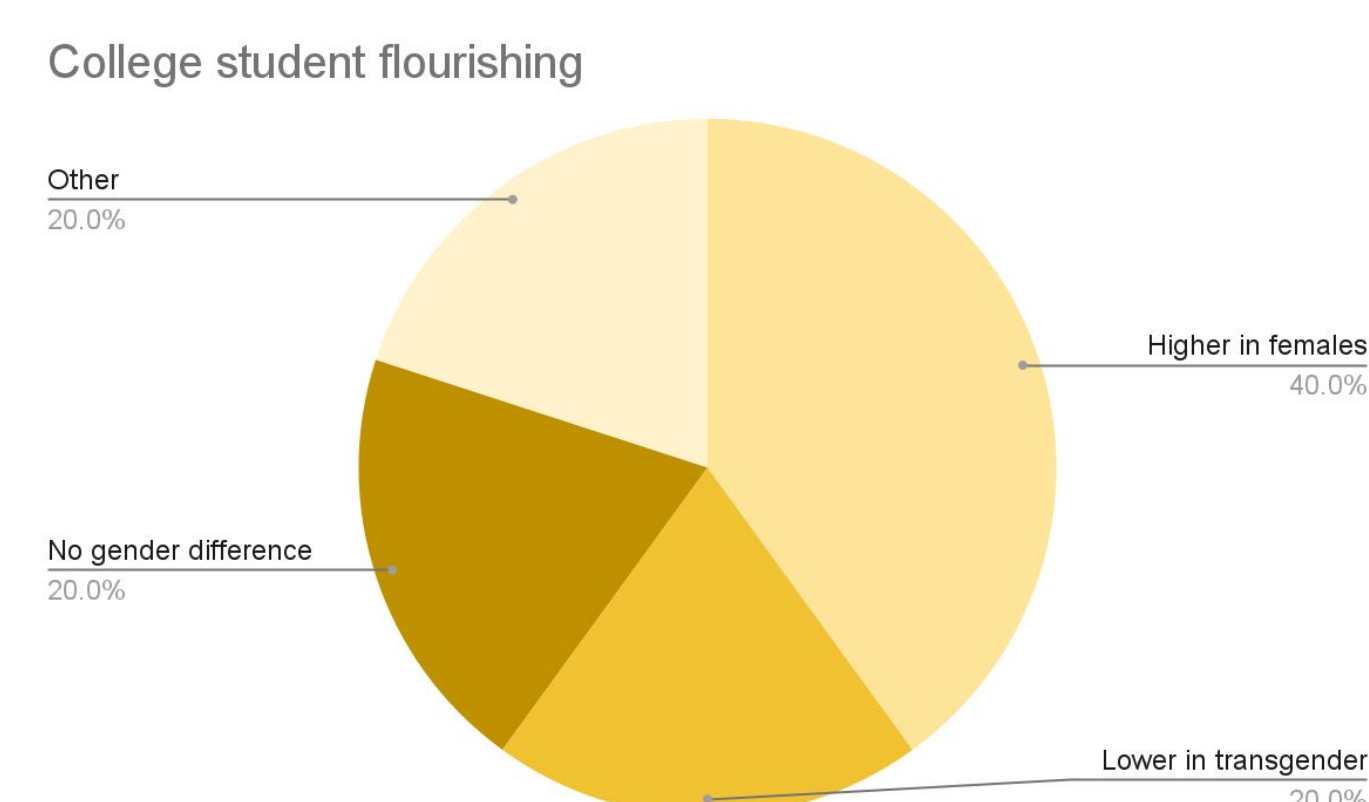
Results



- Resilience in both age groups saw **mixed results**. There was a relatively even divide between studies reporting higher resilience in males and females.



- **Gender was not a predictor** of flourishing levels for adolescents, but other factors increased flourishing levels.



- College students saw **mixed results** as some studies showed males having higher flourishing while others said females did or that there were no gender differences at all.

Discussion

- Gaps in literature:
 - Most articles not analyze results of non-binary students.
 - López-Madriral et al. (2021) was the only study that found that **men's resilience levels caught up to the women's levels as they transitioned into adulthood.**
 - Long term effects of the pandemic on resilience and flourishing levels have not been researched
- Limitations:
 - Adolescents ranged from middle school to high school, so conclusions could have been made that do not apply to all adolescents.
 - Only used two databases to collect the data. Other databases may have resulted in different articles with different results from those collected.
- Future considerations:
 - Researchers should **conduct studies on non-binary students and compare students' mental health in countries across the globe.**
 - Educators, parents, and teachers should acknowledge the mental health challenges that the pandemic posed for adolescents and college students. They can offer empathy, create flexible schedules, and promote positive socialization.

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References

